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# AMERICANS AND JAPANESE

# BLACKMAIL PORTUGAL

Geneva, 3 March (ETNA) - As the Commission on Human Rights is edging towards a close, Australian, Canadian, Japanese and US delegations are exerting what a Western diplomat considers "undue pressure" on Portugal to back down on key points in the European Community's draft resolution on East Timor.

This morning, in an unprecedented surprise move, the heads of delegations of the four countries mentioned requested a meeting with the head of the Portuguese delegation, in what is regarded as "unethical blackmailing of the Portuguese".

José Ramos-Horta, the Timorese Resistance spokesperson at the Commission, reacted angrily to the news and said in a comment to ETNA: "the Australians, Americans, Canadians and Japanese do not have any integrity or consistency in dealing with human rights. They do not want to take a position that might offend their client, which is Indonesia. Hence they choose to bully Portugal. It makes me feel like throwing up."

A Portuguese human rights activist said: "this amounts to an assault on Portuguese dignity, which we as Portuguese can not tolerate. If the Portuguese delegation succumbs to this pressure, it will be very humiliating for Portugal."

At stake is a draft resolution sponsored by the 12 members of the European Community and now endorsed by 20 other countries, condemning the massacre of unarmed civilians by Indonesian forces in East Timor on November 12 1991. According to one observer, if the current draft is put to the vote, it would have the support of a comfortable majority of the Commission's members. A decision on whether the Commission will vote on the EC draft resolution or adopt a so-called "consensus decision" will be made today.

end.

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